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AUTHOR Matross, Ronald; And Others
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ABSTRACT

The University Opinion Poll conducted a survey of student opinion on issues related to University-sponsored day care, the role of the Minnesota Public Interest Research Group (MPIRG) and the University's policy on buying lettuce for its food services. Four hundred fifty-two respondents, 76% of a random sample of University of Minnesota students, were contacted for their opinions. Major findings were: A majority of respondents favored a University-sponsored day care service, but were unwilling to support a student fee increase to help fund it. Most respondents rated MPIRG's performance on student issues as adequate or good, but felt that MPIRG should spend more effort on student issues in the future. Responses to questions about the University's lettuce policy are not included in this report. (Author)

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UNIVERSITY OPINION POLL 9: CHILD CARE, MPIRG, LETTUCE

PRELIMINARY REPORT

Ronald Matross, Deborah Seaburg, and Joel Brown

Student Life Studies
University of Minnesota

The University Opinion Poll conducted a survey of student opinion on issues related to University-sponsored day care, the role of the Minnesota Public Interest Research Group, and the University's policy on buying lettuce for its food services. Four hundred and fifty two respondents, 76% of a random sample of University of Minnesota students, were contacted for their opinions. Major findings were: A majority of respondents favored a University-sponsored day care service, but were unwilling to support a student fee increase to help fund it. Most respondents rated MPIRG's performance on student issues as adequate or good, but felt that MPIRG should spend more effort on student issues in the future. Responses to questions about the University's lettuce policy are not included in this report.

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UNIVERSITY OPINION POLL 9: CHILD CARE, MPIRG, & LETTUCE

Ronald Matross, Deborah Seaburg, and Joel Brown

Student Life Studies
University of Minnesota

At the request of the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, the University Opinion Poll conducted a survey of student opinion on three issues: University sponsored day care for the children of students, the role of the Minnesota Public Interest Research Group, and the University's policy on buying lettuce.

Survey Items

Survey items were developed during the week of February 10 to 18, 1974, in meetings between staff of the University Opinion Poll and the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. Item selection was based on staff understanding of the relevant issues, technical quality, and the length limitations of a telephone interview. The selected questions were telephone pre-tested by a professional interviewer on February 18, 1974.

Conduct of the Survey

The survey was conducted by telephone, with a supplemental mailing. During the period of February 22 through 25, 1974, Koser Surveys Inc. called all the student in the sample with local phone numbers. Each number was attempted a minimum of four times at different hours of the day. Ten percent of the respondents were contacted a second time as a validation check. During the period of February 21 through March 5, the survey was mailed to all those without local phone numbers and to all who could not be contacted by Koser Surveys.

Sample and Response Rates

The total sample included the names of 591 students from the Twin Cities Campus of the University of Minnesota. The sample was developed from a computer-generated 2% sampling of names listed in the active file of the Office of Admissions and Records. Extension students and those not currently registered as U. of M. students were not included. The initial sample was larger than needed and was reduced by eliminating every fourth name. By March 5, 1974 complete responses had been received from 76% (N=452) of the total sample. Of those whom Koser Surveys attempted to call, complete responses were received from 86% (N-406). Of those who were mailed the survey, 39% (N=46) responded.

Results

The percentages of respondents choosing each response alternative for each question are presented. Differences between response categories of fewer than five percentage points should not be considered significant. Percentages may sum to 99% or 101% because of rounding errors.

I. Child Care

1. A proposed University sponsored day care center would charge student users based on their ability to pay. Should money from student fees be used to subsidized the cost of day care use by students?

	% of sample (N=452)
a. Yes	42
b. No	46
c. Undecided	12

2. One proposal is that all students' fees should be increased 30¢ per quarter to help fund student day care. Do you feel this fee should be required?

	% of sample (N=452)
a. Yes	32
b. No	64
c. Undecided	4

3. Would you be interested in using a day care service during the next academic year?

	%of Sample (N=452)
a. Yes	9
b. No	89
c. Undecided	2

4. Do you think the University should establish a day care center?

	% of sample (N=452)
a. Yes	84
b. No	8
c. Undecided	8

II. MPIRG

The next questions deal with MPIRG ("empurg"), the Minnesota Public Interest Research Group. This is a consumer group entirely paid for by an optional student fee from all U. of M. campuses.

5. How familiar are you with the activities of MPIRG?

	% of sample (N=452)
a. Very familiar	5
b. Fairly familiar	25
c. Somewhat familiar	51
d. Never heard of MPIRG	19

(Note: if respondent never heard of MPIRG, questions 6,7, and 8 were not asked.)

6. How would you rate MPIRG's performance on issues primarily affecting students?

	% of sample (N=373)
a. Good	15
b. Adequate	38
c. Poor	20
d. No opinion	27

7. How would you rate MPIRG's performance on issues affecting consumers in general?

	% of sample (N=371)
a. Good	36
b. Adequate	29
c. Poor	8
d. No opinion	27

8. In the future how much effort should MPIRG spend on issues primarily affecting students?

	% of sample (N=371)
a. More than it has in the past	46
b. Less than it has in the past	3
c. About as much as it has in the past	27
d. No opinion	23

III. Lettuce

9. The University is examining its policy on buying lettuce for its food services. The reason for this examination is a controversy between two groups attempting to represent workers who pick lettuce--The United Farm Workers led by Cesar Chavez and the Teamsters Union.

In your opinion, what should the University's policy be on buying lettuce?*

	% of sample (N=452)
a. Buy the best lettuce at the lowest price.	
b. Buy only lettuce picked by the United Farm Workers.	
c. Buy only lettuce picked by the Teamsters Union.	
d. Buy half from each group.	
e. No opinion	

10. The University food services may allow patrons to choose lettuce from either of the two groups. Do you approve, disapprove, or have no opinion of this plan?*

	% of sample (N=452)
a. Approve	
b. Disapprove	
c. No opinion	

*Responses to these questions are not included in this report.